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Author, Band Donate to Legal Aid

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Media General News Service

Best-selling author John Grisham and the Dave Matthews Band have chipped in a total of \$530,000 for a new building to house the Legal Aid Justice Center.

The announcement came Wednesday at a wine-and-cheese gala celebrating the center's capital fund-raising campaign. The event was held in the shell of an old warehouse on Preston Avenue, where Legal Aid intends to move.

Since the campaign began in 2000, it has raised nearly \$1.1 million of the \$1.85 million goal, Director Alex Gulotta said.

In announcing a \$280,000 gift, Grisham said, "Legal Aid is the last hope ... for many people living in this community."

The center, which recently merged with Legal Aid offices in Richmond and Petersburg, gives free legal service to poor people in civil cases.

One-third of the center's \$600,000 annual budget comes from the state.

The second-largest donation announced Wednesday was \$250,000 from Dave Matthews, his band, band manager Coran Capshaw and the group's Bama Works fund.